

December 10, 2009

TO: Dena Jaskar

FROM: Teresa Parsons, SPHR  
Director's Review Program Supervisor

SUBJECT: Dena Jaskar v. The Evergreen State College (TESC)  
Allocation Review Request ALLO-09-017

On October 7, 2009, I conducted a Director's review telephone conference regarding the allocation of your position. In addition to you, Human Resources Consultant Sarah Mealy participated in the conference on behalf of TESC.

### **Director's Determination**

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to December 5, 2008, the date TESC's Human Resources Office received your revised request for a position review. As the Director's designee, I carefully considered all of the documentation in the file, the exhibits presented during the Director's review conference, and the verbal comments provided by both parties. Based on my review and analysis of your assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude your position is properly allocated to the Office Assistant 3 classification.

### **Background**

Your position is assigned to the Washington Center at TESC. The center was created by the Legislature to partner with other institutions throughout the state and country to share ideas about learning communities. On November 24, 2008, TESC's Human Resources (HR) Office received your request for a position review, asking that your position be reallocated from an Office Assistant 2 to the Program Coordinator classification. On December 5, 2008, the HR Office received your revised request. In January and February 2009, Ms. Mealy conducted job audit interviews with you, your supervisor, Program Support Supervisor Rachel Burke, and Washington Center co-directors Gillies Malnarich and Emily Lardner. On February 12, 2009, Ms. Mealy issued the results of your position review, determining that your position should be reallocated to the Office Assistant 3 classification.

On March 9, 2009, you requested a Director's review of TESC's allocation determination. The following summarizes your perspective, as well as your employer's.

### **Summary of Ms. Jaskar's Perspective**

Ms. Jaskar describes the Washington Center as a public service center independent of the main body of TESC campus operations. As a result, Ms. Jaskar asserts she performs clerical support for a unique program requiring specialized knowledge. Ms. Jaskar further notes that the Center produces large quantities of project work. Ms. Jaskar indicates the Center also sponsors workshops for faculty around the country, including the weeklong National Summer Institute on Learning Communities each year. Ms. Jaskar states that she has taken on additional responsibilities previously assigned to a Program Coordinator position and that she has taken on supervisory duties of student employees due to a reduction in her supervisor's work hours. Ms. Jaskar also states that she leads a temporary Office Assistant 2 position and provides direct support to the co-directors. Ms. Jaskar asserts her position requires a good understanding of the center's unique procedures, as well as where to refer faculty using the Center's services. Although Ms. Jaskar had requested reallocation to the Program Coordinator, she acknowledges the Program Assistant may be the appropriate fit for her position.

### **Summary of TESC's Reasoning**

TESC acknowledges the Washington Center as a separate program with a unique function separate from the college's primary operations. However, TESC asserts the majority of duties and responsibilities assigned to Ms. Jaskar's position are clerical in nature and transferrable to other programs performing clerical/office support. TESC describes Ms. Jaskar's position as the primary telephone contact providing information and responding to inquiries. TESC recognizes Ms. Jaskar's knowledge of the Center's mission and where to find information to assist those using the Center's services. However, TESC contends Ms. Jaskar's position has not been tasked with coordinating program operations. Instead, TESC indicates Ms. Jaskar responds to emails, phone calls, and walk-in visitors; composes correspondence; reviews and posts web content in the proper format; collects registrations; prepares travel arrangements and itineraries; processes invoices; and provides oversight of student and part-time clerical support staff. While TESC acknowledges Ms. Jaskar may be assigned some project work, TESC contends the majority of her assigned work is consistent with the complex, clerical duties described by the Office Assistant 3 classification.

### **Rationale for Director's Determination**

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

The Position Purpose described on the Position Review Request (PRR) includes the following (Exhibit B-8).

Provide office/clerical tasks in support of Washington Center activities. Functioning as a primary telephone contact, sending appropriate resources per external requests; assisting Center staff to produce one to two-day workshops; responding to inquiries regarding campus visits to Evergreen, gathering and assembling registrations and sending confirmations to Washington Center participants.

A summary of the specific duties identified on the PRR (Exhibit B-8) and clarified by you in the audit interview with Ms. Mealy (Exhibit B-2) includes the following:

- Keep information, events, and resources current and accurate on the website. Participate in the re-design and evaluation of website effectiveness (15%).

*During the audit interview with Ms. Mealy, you indicated you use Dreamweaver and post outside events, resources, and flyers to the website, reviewing aesthetics, font size, grammar, and ensuring links are working (Exhibit B-2, question #9).*

- Prepare travel arrangements and itineraries (15%).
- Purchasing - order books and supplies for the Center. Manage subscriptions and ensure memberships are kept up to date. Approve/deny purchase card activities and reconcile monthly (20%).

*During the Director's review conference, you indicated that you order office supplies but other purchases, including new subscriptions, are at the request of the co-directors. You described the approval/denial of purchase card as approving use for office supplies and reviewing the statements. You also indicated that you sign invoices and forward to Accounts Receivable. You noted that you reconcile each month; however, the co-directors are ultimately responsible for transactions and final signature.*

- Supervise student employees and instruct temporary Office Assistant 2. Train new employees in all aspects of the Center's work (20%).

*You indicated that at the time relevant to this review, you supervised one student employee working 16-19 hours per week (Exhibit B-2, question #13). In the Supervisor Review section of the PRR, your supervisor, Ms. Burke, clarified that at that time, you had been supervising the student for the past 3 months, since Ms. Burke had started school. You also indicated that you served as a lead to one temporary, part-time office assistant. TESC*

*acknowledged that you oversee work but stated that you did not lead or supervise the equivalent of one full-time equivalent (FTE).*

- Finance - prepare contracts, A-19 invoices, reimbursements, travel reimbursements, and other financial paperwork (15%).

*During the audit interview, you explained that you prepare contracts using template, draft scope of work, pay, dates, and break down the charges. After signing the contracts, they go to the Purchasing Office. The examples you gave include personal client, hotel, and lodging arrangements. You also noted that your supervisor and co-director have final authority for the content of the contracts (Exhibit B-2, question #15).*

- Publishing - proofread, copy, edit, and format publications for the Center (10%).

*During the audit interview, you explained that you proofread, copy edit, or format journal articles, handouts, and teaching modules for comprehension, grammar, typos, and that you make suggestions for content changes. You also noted that you work closely with one of the co-directors on the journal articles. You also prepare bibliographies from a citation program that maintains information on different books that are categorized based on type (Exhibit B-2, question #17).*

*You also indicated that you worked on three publications during the relevant timeframe for this review as an opportunity to work on new projects, which may take up to 85% of your time when working on them (Exhibit B-2, question #18).*

- Serve as primary contact, handling the Center's phone line and answering inquires and requests (5-10%).

You also included duties relating to seasonal or project work, including design, layout, and production of journals and other print materials. Although the duties include a reference to the SSAC [Spreadsheets Across Curriculum] Project budget, you clarified that your work on that projected was completed in March 2008. You also clarified that you do not monitor budget activities for the Center. Your supervisor and co-directors signed the PRR as accurate and complete.

The co-directors also included a statement indicating you had taken on additional duties beyond your current job classification (which was an Office Assistant 2 at the time) and referenced your statements regarding the Program Coordinator on page one of the PRR. The co-director's provided additional insight about tasks previously assigned to the Program Coordinator during the audit interview with Ms. Mealy, as documented in question #13. They explained that the duties now assigned to your position include publication and layout; Center newsletter; answering questions, first point of contact, and directing people; travel;

faculty visits to TESC; purchase card and office supplies; making event arrangements; and registration forms ((Exhibit B-3).

In reviewing the percentages of time allotted to these specific tasks, your supervisor indicated that 10% of your time was spent on special projects, such as researching, compiling, and providing resources; 5% involved print related tasks like copy editing, layout, and bibliographies; and 3% involved work around campus visits (Exhibit B-4, question #2). This is fairly consistent with your breakdown of duties on the PRR. Your supervisor described the majority of your tasks as including immediate short term office tasks; web posting; sending/receiving emails and fielding inquiries; processing registrations and performing database maintenance and supervising/leading student and temporary employees (Exhibit B-4, question #2).

When comparing the assignment of work and level of responsibility to the available class specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing characteristics are primary considerations. While examples of typical work identified in a class specification do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned within a classification.

The class series concept on the **Program Assistant** class specification includes the definition of **program** and reads as follows:

Perform work requiring knowledge and experience that is specific to a program. Organize and perform work related to program operations independent of the daily administrative office needs of the supervisor. Represent the program to clients, participants and/or members of the public.

A program is a specialized area with specific complex components and discrete tasks which distinguish it from the main body of an organization. A program is specific to a particular subject. The specialized tasks involve interpretation of policies, procedures and regulations, budget coordination/administration, independent functioning and typically, public contact. Duties are not of a general support nature transferable from one program to another. Performance of clerical duties is in support of incumbent's performance of specialized tasks.

The Program Assistant has been defined as performing "specialized technical/clerical duties in support of a program activity." The distinguishing characteristics include the following:

Under general supervision, perform work requiring knowledge and experience specific to the program. Provide students, staff, program participants and/or the public with information and interpretation of policies and activities related to the program specialty. Compose written communications, and establish and maintain records relating to program operations.

The Program Coordinator level is defined as coordinating the operation of a specialized or technical program. The distinguishing characteristics include the following:

Under general direction, perform work using knowledge and experience specific to the program. Exercise independent judgment in interpreting and applying rules and regulations. Independently advise students, staff, program participants and/or the public regarding program content, policies, procedures and activities; select/recommend alternative courses of action and either:

- Project, monitor, maintain, initiate and/or approve expenditures on program budgets

OR

- Have extensive involvement with students, staff, the public and/or agencies in carrying out program activities, and coordinate, schedule and monitor program activities to determine consistency with program goals.

I recognize the Washington Center is considered a specific program. I also recognize that you perform some duties similar to those described in the Program Assistant job classification. However, the class series concept for the Program Assistant and Program Coordinator positions indicate that "[d]uties are not of a general support nature transferable from one program to another." Further, "[p]erformance of clerical duties is in support of incumbent's performance of specialized tasks." When considering the totality of the duties you perform, the majority fit within the Office Assistant 3 classification and may be transferable as clerical functions performed in other program areas. For example, you update the website, handle all travel arrangements and process travel reimbursements, order supplies, process and reconcile purchase card transactions, and direct the work of temporary or student employees performing clerical tasks as well.

I understand your position serves as the primary contact and that you have a strong working knowledge of the Center's mission and activities; however, as you indicated to Ms. Mealy during the audit interview, the information you provide includes copies of papers and resources or referral to a particular website, as well as providing information about events, costs, and dates. While some of your duties may fall within the scope of the Program Assistant classification, the majority fit the Office Assistant 3 definition, which reads as follows:

Under general supervision, independently perform a variety of complex clerical projects and assignments such as preparing reports, preparing, reviewing, verifying and processing fiscal documents and/or financial records, composing correspondence such as transmittals and responses to frequent requests for information, establishing manual or electronic recordkeeping/filing systems and/or data base files, and responding to inquiries requiring substantive knowledge of office/departmental policies and procedures. Positions may perform specialized complex word processing tasks in a word processing unit or complex rapid data inquiry and/or entry functions.

The distinguishing characteristics further indicate that assignments and projects are complex in nature and that independent performance of complex clerical assignments requires substantive knowledge of a variety of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, processes, materials, or equipment. In addition, problems are resolved by choosing from established procedures and/or devising work methods. Guidance is available for new or unusual situations and deviation from established parameters requires approval. The work performed is periodically reviewed to verify compliance with established procedures. At the Office Assistant 3 level, positions may also provide work direction to lower level staff and may assist in training new staff, which is consistent with your oversight of student workers and/or temporary employees. Consistent with the Office Assistant 3 job class, your position requires independent performance of duties while having substantive knowledge about the Center's services. You also work to resolve problems and respond to inquiries by telephone, through email, or directly to individuals visiting the Center at the Evergreen campus.

It is clear the work you perform is highly valued. A position's allocation does not diminish the quality of work performed and is not a reflection of performance. Rather, an allocation is based on the majority of work assigned to a position. Based on the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to your position, the Office Assistant 3 classification is the best fit.

### **Appeal Rights**

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board . . . . Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911. The PRB Office is located at 600 South Franklin, Olympia, Washington. The main telephone number is (360) 664-0388, and the fax number is (360) 753-0139.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

c: Sarah Mealy, TESC  
Lisa Skriletz, DOP

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

**Dena Jaskar v. The Evergreen State College**

**ALLO-09-017**

List of Exhibits

**A. Dena Jaskar Exhibits**

1. Request for Director's Review (PRB appeal form) March 9, 2009
2. February 12, 2009 Position Review and Reallocation Memorandum
3. Email from Rachel Burke to Sarah Mealy, February 13, 2009, requesting reconsideration

**B. The Evergreen State College Exhibits**

1. February 12, 2009 Position Review and Reallocation Memorandum
2. Notes from job audit interview with Dena Jaskar
3. Notes from job audit interview with Emily Lardner and Gillies Malnarich (Co-Directors)
4. Notes from job audit interview with Rachel Burke (Supervisor)
5. List of examples of tasks performed – written by Rachel Burke (Supervisor)
6. Classification Specifications considered during TESC's Review
  - a. Office Assistant 2
  - b. Office Assistant 3
  - c. Program Assistant (Class Series Concept)
  - d. Program Coordinator
7. March 2003 Position Description for Dena Jaskar's Position
8. Position Review Request from Dena Jaskar, revised December 5, 2008
9. Position Review Request from Dena Jaskar, November 24, 2008